REMARKS

As an initial matter, applicant thanks the Examiner for the courtesies extended to the undersigned in the telephone interview conducted on June 4, 2007.

The application has been reviewed in light of the final Office Action dated March 21, 2007. Claims 1-12 were pending in this application, with claim 13 having previously been canceled, without prejudice or disclaimer. By the present Amendment, claims 1-10 have been amended to clarify the claimed subject matter, and new claims 14 and 15 have been added. Accordingly, claims 1-12, 14 and 15 are presented for continued examination, with claims 1 and 5 being in independent form.

Claims 1-12 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as purportedly unpatentable over U.S. Patent 5,465,163 to Yoshihara et al. in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,223,181 to Goldberg et al. and U.S. Patent No. 6,148,118 to Murakami et al.

Applicant has carefully considered the Examiner's comments and the cited art, and respectfully submits that independent claims 1 and 5 are patentable over the cited art, for at least the following reasons.

This application relates to operations of a facsimile device which can handle a large size (that is, larger than A3-size) subject copy. Facsimile communication protocols require facsimile data to be A3-size width transmittable. Conventional facsimile apparatuses (such as proposed in Yoshihara and Murikami) typically require the operator to scan the large-size subject copy as a plurality of A3-sized copies (because the scanner is only capable of scanning areas of approximately A3-size) and specify that the multiple copies must be composed into a large image on the receiving end.

In contrast, the claimed subject matter of the present application relates to a facsimile

device which scans, as a single image, the large size subject copy and generates image data of the large-size subject copy as a single image, and then automatically divides the image data in a sub-scanning direction into a plurality of read areas according to a specified overlapping width, with each read area including divisional lines of data having a predetermined width. Claim 1 has been amended to more clearly describe this feature. Each of independent claims 1 and 5 addresses these features, as well as additional features.

Yoshihara, as understood by Applicant, proposes a copier wherein handling of large-sized original requires the user to specify the number of read operations (that is, the user decides the number of image portions into which a large-sized image is to be split), and then for each read operation the user orients the original on the mount glass and presses the read key to trigger the read operation. When the read operations are completed, the operator presses the read-end key, and the copier proceeds to compose the image portions into a complete document image from the stored image portions.

For example, Yoshihara, column 5, lines 35-40, states as follows:

> In the following explanation, it is assumed that one image original is divided and is read in four reading operations. ***The operator sets the number "4" of reading operations by a key input from the operation unit 10 (step S1), and sets an image area slightly larger than 1/4 of the original on the original mount glass 22.*** If the CPU 50 determines that the read key has been depressed (step S2), the image area of the original set on the original mount glass 22 is read by the image reading unit 20 (step S3), and the read image is stored in the bit-map memory 341 (step S4). ***The same processing is performed for the remaining 3/4 image areas (steps S2, S3, S4 and S5).*** At that time, read images of the remaining image areas are stored in the bit-map memories 341a, 341b and 341c. ***When the operator sets an image area slightly larger than 1/4 of the image original on the original mount glass 22, the operator must set the image area so that surrounding portions of the set image area overlap other image areas.*** FIGS. 6(2), 6(3), 6(4) and 6(5) illustrate a specific example of read images stored in the bit-map memories 341, 341a, 341b and 341c.

Thus, in the approach proposed by Yoshihara, the user must decide the number of image

portions into which the large-sized image is to be split, and must carefully position the original large-sized image manually for reading of each image portion.

Yoshihara simply does not teach or suggest a facsimile device which scans the large size subject copy and generates image data of the large-size subject copy as a single image, and then automatically divides the image data in a sub-scanning direction into a plurality of read areas according to a specified overlapping width, if the size of the subject copy is larger than the A3-size.

Goldberg and Murakami, like Yoshihara, do not teach or suggest, however, scanning a subject copy having a size larger than a A3-size and generating image data based on the scanning of the subject copy, and automatically dividing the image data in a sub-scanning direction into a plurality of read areas according to a specified overlapping width, if the size of the subject copy is larger than the A3-size, as provided by the subject matter of claim 1 of the present application.

Goldberg, as understood by Applicant, proposes an approach for image processing wherein a regular size image is rotated with a small buffer memory which has a storage capacity less than that required to store a regular size image for a 8.5" by 11" sheet of paper. In the approach proposed by Goldberg, the image is divided into image sections, each image section is rotated and the rotated image is constructed from the rotated image sections.

Murakami, as understood by Applicant, proposes a photocopier having a conventional type platen glass which has a slightly larger than A3-size area (see Fig. 3 of Murakami). When a user uses such a photocopier to copy a large-sized original, the user must manually position the original on the platen glass and split the document into multiple portions which are each approximately A3-sized.

Although Murakami proposes an approach for joining the partial image portions into a

single image, Murakami, like the other cited references, does not teach or suggest a facsimile device which scans a subject copy having a size larger than a A3-size and generates image data based on the scanning of the subject copy, and automatically divides the image data in a sub-scanning direction into a plurality of read areas according to a specified overlapping width, if the size of the subject copy is larger than the A3-size, as provided by the subject matter of claim 1 of the present application.

Independent claim 5 is patentably distinct from the cited art for at least similar reasons.

Accordingly, for at least the above-stated reasons, Applicant respectfully submits that independent claims 1 and 5 and the claims depending therefrom are patentable over the cited art.

In view of the remarks hereinabove, Applicant submits that the application is now in condition for allowance, and earnestly solicits the allowance of the application.

If a petition for an extension of time is required to make this response timely, this paper should be considered to be such petition. The Office is hereby authorized to charge any fees that are required in connection with this amendment and to credit any overpayment to our Deposit Account No. 03-3125.

If a telephone interview could advance the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to call the undersigned attorney.

Respectfully submitted,

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